

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
BOARD OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING – APRIL 4, 2002**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ed Bell (Designee of Cara Metz, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Historic Commission)
Terry French (Designee of John Warner, State Archivist)
Lenny Loparto (Designee of Brona Simon, State Archaeologist)
Kevin Mooney (Designee of Nancy Thornton, Director of DEM Division of Waterways)
George Agganis (Designee of Richard Murray, Director of Environmental Law Enforcement,
Joe Pelczarski (Designee of Thomas Skinner, Director of Coastal Zone Management)
Victor Mastone, Director (Staff for the Board)
David W. Trubey, Deputy Director (Staff for the Board)

MEMBERS ABSENT: VACANT (Dive Community Representative)
VACANT (Dive Community Representative)
VACANT (Marine Archaeologist)

PROCEEDINGS:

The public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources was convened by the Director, Victor Mastone, at 1:30 PM on 4 April 2002 in the CZM Conference Room at 251 Causeway Street, Boston.

1. MINUTES

A. Minutes of 31 January 2002

Victor asked the Board if there were any comments or corrections to the minutes of the public meeting held on 31 January 2002. There were no comments or corrections to the minutes.

Terry French moved to accept the minutes of the public meeting. Ed Bell seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS – Victor changed the order of business in moving directly to **OLD BUSINESS** to accommodate the schedule of Oscar Snow of Underwater Discoveries Unlimited.

2. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Victor thanked the Board for agreeing to reschedule the meeting of 28 March to today, as he was invited to participate in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Ocean Exploration's North Atlantic Regional Workshop. The workshop was intended to help the agency identify priorities for its 2003 grants. He and the Connecticut state geologist were the only state officials in attendance, as the group was comprised primarily of representatives of the federal government and universities. Although the majority of the group was from the field of marine biology, archaeological research was considered a top priority for funding.

Victor noted that the minutes from the Board's public meetings will be posted on its website at <http://www.state.ma.us/czm/buar/htm>. He added that David Trubey has been working on converting the Board's mailing list to email by urging mail recipients to provide email address at which they can receive meeting announcements, minutes and other Board related materials. The long-term goal is to eliminate the traditional mailings (except to Board members and permittees) to save the Commonwealth both money and time.

Victor reported that the Environmental Bond Bill (H4909) is still pending further action in the legislature. The current line item for the Board is 1.6 million dollars. He encouraged anyone who supports the work of the Board to contact their legislator regarding this bill.

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3. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

There were no Board member reports.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: OUTREACH

Victor reported that he was contacted by a small, informal group of divers on the North Shore that are interested in forming an avocational program for the investigation and documentation of shipwreck sites. He was told that the group is not interested in the collecting of artifacts. He noted that he and David are planning to meet with them to discuss opportunities for training and potential projects.

Ed Bell reported that the Massachusetts Historical Commission is currently planning for Archaeology Week, which will be October 5-14, 2002. He stated the Commission is seeking organizations that are interested in hosting exhibits and will be producing the calendar of events in the coming weeks. Victor reported that the Board would be co-hosting an exhibit at the Scituate Maritime and Irish Mossing Museum with the Scituate Historical Society. David Trubey will be coordinating this event. He stated that Bassings Cove Maritime Association (BCMA) presently has an impressive exhibit on the Forest Queen site at the museum and that it will tie in well with that planned by the Board. Victor noted that over the past years, Tom Mulloy and Bill Carter of the BCMA have encouraged the Board to work with the Scituate Historical Society. He also noted that the Board might also have a small exhibit in the atrium of 251 Causeway Street for employees of the building.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Bassings Cove Maritime Association

Victor reported that Bassings Cove Maritime Association (BCMA) had submitted its Excavation Permit renewal application and Annual Report in accordance with the Board's regulations. Thomas Mulloy and William Carter were in attendance to represent BCMA.

Mr. Mulloy reminded the Board that BCMA lost a commitment of financial support limiting further work on the project. He noted that the condition of the site at this time is unknown because, due to medical problems, very little diving on the site was conducted during the field season. BCMA is planning to get back out to the site to determine the amount of exposure. Mr. Mulloy stated that the organization would like to videotape work at the site this season to demonstrate to children what it is like to work on an underwater site. He added that if there were any changes in the status of the project, he would be sure to notify the Board. Victor asked if it is accurate to say that for now, BCMA is maintaining the status quo. Mr. Carter responded that it is an accurate statement. Mr. Carter stated that members of the Board are welcome to dive the site this summer.

Kevin Mooney moved to renew, retroactive to January 31, 2002, the Excavation Permit (91-001) held by Bassings Cove Maritime Association for its Scituate site with all conditions remaining in effect and the additional condition that the permittee submit for Board approval a site assessment and detailed scope of work prepared by the project archaeologist prior to undertaking any site excavation activities relative to the removal of the main conglomerate. Terry French seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

B. Underwater Discoveries Unlimited

Victor reported that Underwater Discoveries Unlimited (UDU) had submitted its Excavation Permit renewal application and Annual Report in accordance with the Board's regulations. Oscar Snow and Thomas Jackett were in attendance to represent UDU.

Mr. Snow informed the Board that UDU plans to continue where it left off last season. He stated that the organization purchased a new vessel for the coming season; a 35 foot converted lobster boat with a fiberglass hull. He noted that the vessel will be fitted with a stainless steel prop wash deflector and will be run by his nephew, Tom Jackett. Mr. Snow stated that UDU has maintained regular and frequent contact with the staff of the Cape Cod National Seashore and has submitted information regarding its activities, including the lobster pot problem it encountered last season, to the Town of Wellfleet.

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Ed Bell asked Mr. Snow if he was able to make any progress on having the lobster pots removed. Mr. Snow responded that UDU is now discussing the matter with the Massachusetts Department of Marine Fisheries, but that it will likely have to bring up the matter again before the Lobstermen's Association. He expressed his hope that everyone involved would cooperate, but added that if this is not the case, UDU will have to work around the pots during its survey. Ed stated that the Massachusetts Historical Commission was relieved that the futtocks recovered from the beach in 1999 are now in a proper storage environment at the Cape Cod National Seashore. Victor agreed with Ed and thanked Mr. Snow for bringing this matter to the Board's attention. Mr. Snow stated it is very likely that this artifact is connected to the wreck for which UDU is searching as the location at which it was found corresponds with several magnetic anomalies detected off shore through previous survey work. Mr. Snow noted that UDU now has its own magnetometer and is confident that it will be able to reacquire these targets for future inspection. Mr. Jackett added that he expects the new boat will be fully equipped for survey and excavation work by the end of the first week in May. Lenny Loparto suggested that UDU start discussing the lobster pot situation with the Lobstermen's Association now, as the lobstermen will be setting their gear as of May 1st. He noted that the only reason they have not started setting traps yet is because of restrictions for the protection of right whales in the area. Mr. Snow responded that UDU is planning to talk with the Association's president soon.

Joe Pelczarski asked Mr. Snow if he was aware that the National Park Service had completed survey work designed to locate unexploded ordnance that may be buried along the shoreline and suggested that he might want to obtain this data before he starts any excavation. Mr. Snow responded that he was not aware of this work, but he would certainly look into it.

Victor asked Mr. Snow when UDU's archaeologist, Barbara Kranichfeld, would be available to go out in the field. Mr. Snow responded that he believes she will be available soon. Victor asked that Mr. Snow inform him when she is available so that they could meet.

Joe Pelczarski moved to renew, retroactive to 28 March 2002, the Excavation Permit (96-001) held by Underwater Discoveries Unlimited for its Wellfleet site with all standard conditions in effect and with the further condition that the permittee coordinate all activities with the staff of the Cape Cod National Seashore. Terry French seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Fruitlands Museums

Victor stated that Fruitlands Museums of Harvard, Massachusetts had submitted, in accordance with the Board's standards and guidelines, an application for an excavation permit for a site on the Connecticut River in Turner's Falls. Michael Volmar, Ph.D., Curator and Senior Archaeologist, was in attendance to represent the application.

Dr. Volmar reported that the site was located through biological fieldwork conducted by the University of Massachusetts at Amherst Department of Biology. In the course of sampling for worm activity in the banks of the river, the researchers discovered charcoal lenses. Dr. Volmar stated that he was notified by the University and asked to dive the site. Dr. Volmar's examination of the site revealed exposed features, including concentrations of fire-cracked rock, eroding out of the riverbank. He noted that the proposed project is to map the site, monitor erosion and recover samples in order to identify and document the river dynamics and their effects on prehistoric site morphology. Samples will be obtained by placing a frame into the areas of interest and removing saturated soil. Water will be removed via chemical extraction and will be replaced with a secondary material. The samples will then be impregnated with polymer resins that will allow thin sections to be cut and examined under a microscope. He noted that mapping and monitoring of riverbank erosion would comprise the majority of field activity.

Joe Pelczarski asked if this site was likely exposed until the building of the dam. Dr. Volmar responded that the site is upstream from the dam, but that he did not know enough about the historic water levels to say whether or not the site was exposed. Joe asked if he knew what types of activities took place along the river in this area. Dr. Volmar stated that it is his understanding that logging was a popular activity in the vicinity of the site. Victor stated that the site may have become inundated prior to the building of the dam due to natural changes in the course of the river. He asked Dr. Volmar how much of a current there is in the vicinity of the site and what the visibility is like in the water. Dr. Volmar responded that the current was noticeable, but not overwhelming. He stated that the visibility was five to eight feet on his

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two dives without a lot of suspended sediment. Joe asked if the river is ever drawn down to which Dr. Volmar responded that he does not know. He added that having only visited the site a couple of times, he also does not know if the river is now at a normal height.

Lenny Loparto stated that although the content of the permit application meets the requirements set forth by the Board, he had a difficult time evaluating it in terms of a prehistoric site. He noted that the Board typically focuses on sites that contain objects associated with events, primarily shipwrecks whereas this site is rather a geographic concentration of traces of human activities. He added that it was difficult to ascertain from the application, exactly what the project would entail. He would have liked to have more contextual information of the type that comprises a traditional archaeological report such as produced for a terrestrial site. He added that information such as the distribution of known prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the proposed permit area would have been helpful and noted that this area is a National Register District. Lenny stated that the C-14 results cover an early phase of the Early Woodlands period. He asked Dr. Volmar if any Orient Fish Tale points had been observed in the sites in the district and noted that is so, they would suggest the possibility of a transition Archaic component as well. Lenny asked Dr. Volmar the size of the terrace area described in the application, exactly how much of this terrace area would be surveyed and why a permit area that extends well beyond the known features was requested. Dr. Volmar responded that he requested this area because it was his understanding that the typical permit area granted by the Board for an excavation permit is one square nautical mile. He stated that as he is not sure how far the site extends beyond the known features, it made sense to request a larger area of the cove. He noted that his ability to map the site is contingent upon being able to identify eroding features along the edge of the river channel. He referred to an aerial photograph of the area, which depicts what appears to be the old river channel and river terrace. Regarding the existence of Orient Fishtale points in the area, Dr. Volmar stated that he did not know if any were found through early excavations. However, he noted that based on conversations with Mitch Mulholland of the University of Massachusetts Archaeological Services, there are rich terrestrial archaeological deposits in the river area. Dr. Volmar added that he planned to research what archaeological work has been conducted in the vicinity of the proposed permit. Lenny stated that due to the fact that this project is much different than those for which the Board has granted permits in the past, he hopes that this project will generate a detailed site report in a more traditional format that provides among other things, contextual data and a description of research methodology as if this site was on land. He stated an understanding of the river's dynamics would play a very important role for this project in helping to determine how much of these sites have already eroded beyond the point of recovery. He suggested that Dr. Volmar consider the uses of an underwater suction dredge to see if any diagnostic materials such as lithic debitage can be recovered. Dr. Volmar responded that from the start of the project, he had planned on producing a site report that would include all of the elements described by Lenny and would include information on the river dynamics, site morphology and a map depicting the profile of the sites.

Kevin Mooney suggested that Dr. Volmar research the history of dredging in the project and pointed out that he may be able to obtain core samples that were likely required as part of the dredging process. He stated that DEM Division of Waterways might have some information for that area that could be useful. Dr. Volmar responded that such information would be beneficial and that he would look into it.

Ed Bell asked Dr. Volmar if he had written a formal research design and methodology as part of any grant applications. Dr. Volmar responded that he had, but that it was not much different from what he described in the permit application. Ed emphasized the importance of presenting a strong research design and methodology in order to increase the chances of obtaining grant money. He suggested that Dr. Volmar ask a colleague, such as someone from the Massachusetts Historical Commission review his research design and methodology. Dr. Volmar acknowledged Ed's suggestion.

Lenny Loparto asked Dr. Volmar if he had hand-fanned the burnt rock piles. Dr. Volmar responded that he had not because he was under the impression that the Board would like as little disruption of the site as possible. Victor stated that he had talked with Dr. Volmar about hand fanning earlier and they decided that it was in the best interest of the site, to keep any disturbance to a minimum and added that this is really the first prehistoric site with which the Board has been involved. Victor stated that he perceived that it is the sense of the Board (not a permit condition) that Dr. Volmar should create a site report that lays out the context of the site in a traditional format. He noted that such a report is typically expected as an end product of all Board permitted projects, but that it is not usually asked for at the beginning of a project. He encouraged Dr. Volmar to submit chapters of this report to the Board as he writes them so that the Board can be kept apprised of the research. He also addressed questions regarding the technology required for obtaining sample samples by pointing out that the required tools for this process already exist and are readily available particularly in the field of geology. Concerning the size of the proposed permit area, Victor stated that the having an area larger than

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the extent of the site itself not only provides more protection, but allows for more in depth study of site geomorphology. Kevin Mooney agreed with Victor regarding the need to look at a larger area than the site itself in order to learn about the development of the site and how it relates to other areas along the river. He remarked that this project is an excellent starting point for further research and added that it might be prudent to limit sampling to that which is required to map the site. Dr. Volmar asked if Lenny wants him to hand fan any areas. Lenny responded that the reason he inquired about hand fanning is because it is his understanding that the area where the burnt rock piles are located has already been disturbed and hand fanning might provide data regarding the age of the site and cultural affiliations which could dictate future research questions. He added that he is not suggested that hand fanning be the priority for fieldwork, but as the area where material is eroding out of the river bank is already disturbed, even a cursory look may reveal diagnostic lithics. Kevin suggested that Dr. Volmar take some video footage to assist in site documentation. Dr. Volmar agreed that video recording would be beneficial and that he plans to do this.

Ed Bell moved to grant an Excavation Permit (02-002) to the Fruitlands Museum for its Turner's Falls site with all standard conditions in effect and the further condition that excavation activities be limited to sampling. Kevin Mooney seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

Kevin Mooney moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:36 PM. Joe Pelczarski seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Victor T. Mastone
Director